

I AM...
IRON MAN



AYODELE • AKANDE





THIS IS...

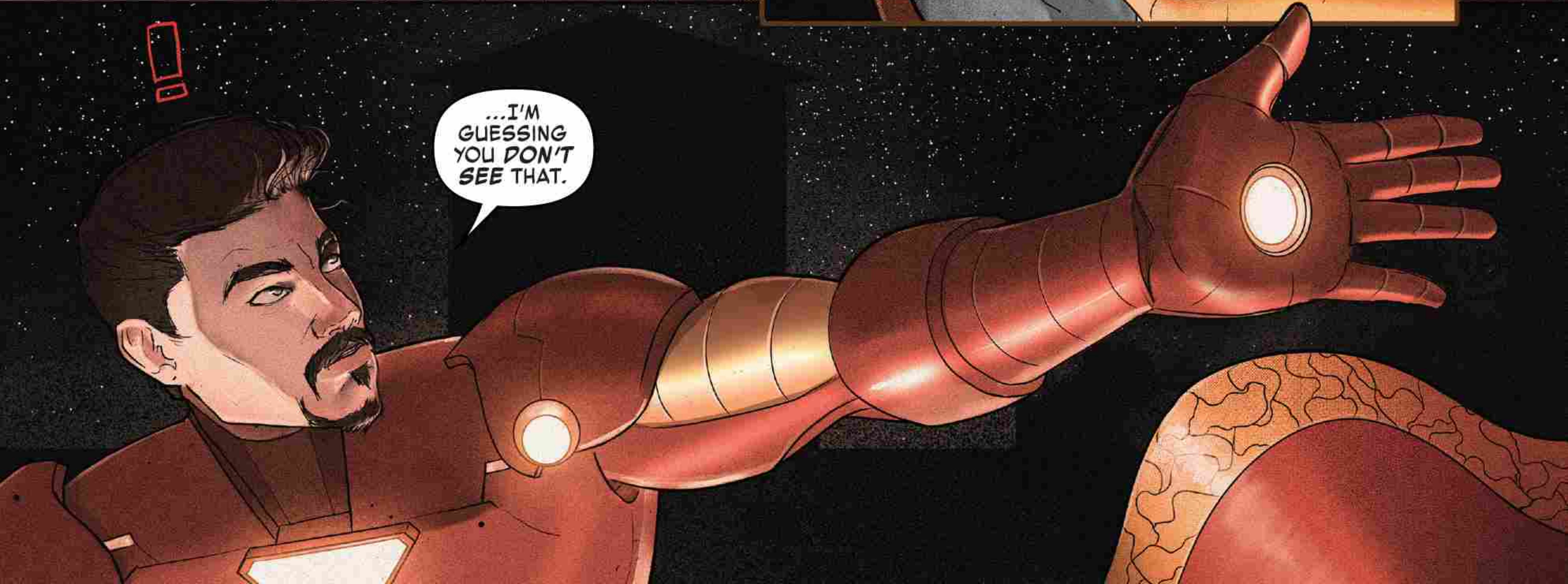
...STRANGE.



JUDGING FROM THE FACT THAT NO ONE IS RUNNING AWAY SCREAMING...



...COUPLED WITH YOUR UNDIVIDED ATTENTION ON YOUR CHOW MEIN...



...I'M GUESSING YOU DON'T SEE THAT.

GREENWICH VILLAGE.

NEW YORK CITY.



THERE ARE
PHANTOM SQUIDS
MATING RIGHT WHERE
YOU'RE SEATED.

ANOTHER
GARGOYLE
DIES.

A **WEREWOLF**
AND TWO **DARK**
ELVES SHARE A
FORBIDDEN
KISS.



SHOW-
OFF.

SO YOU'LL
HAVE TO BE A
LITTLE MORE SPECIFIC
ABOUT THE "THAT"
I'M SUPPOSED
TO SEE.

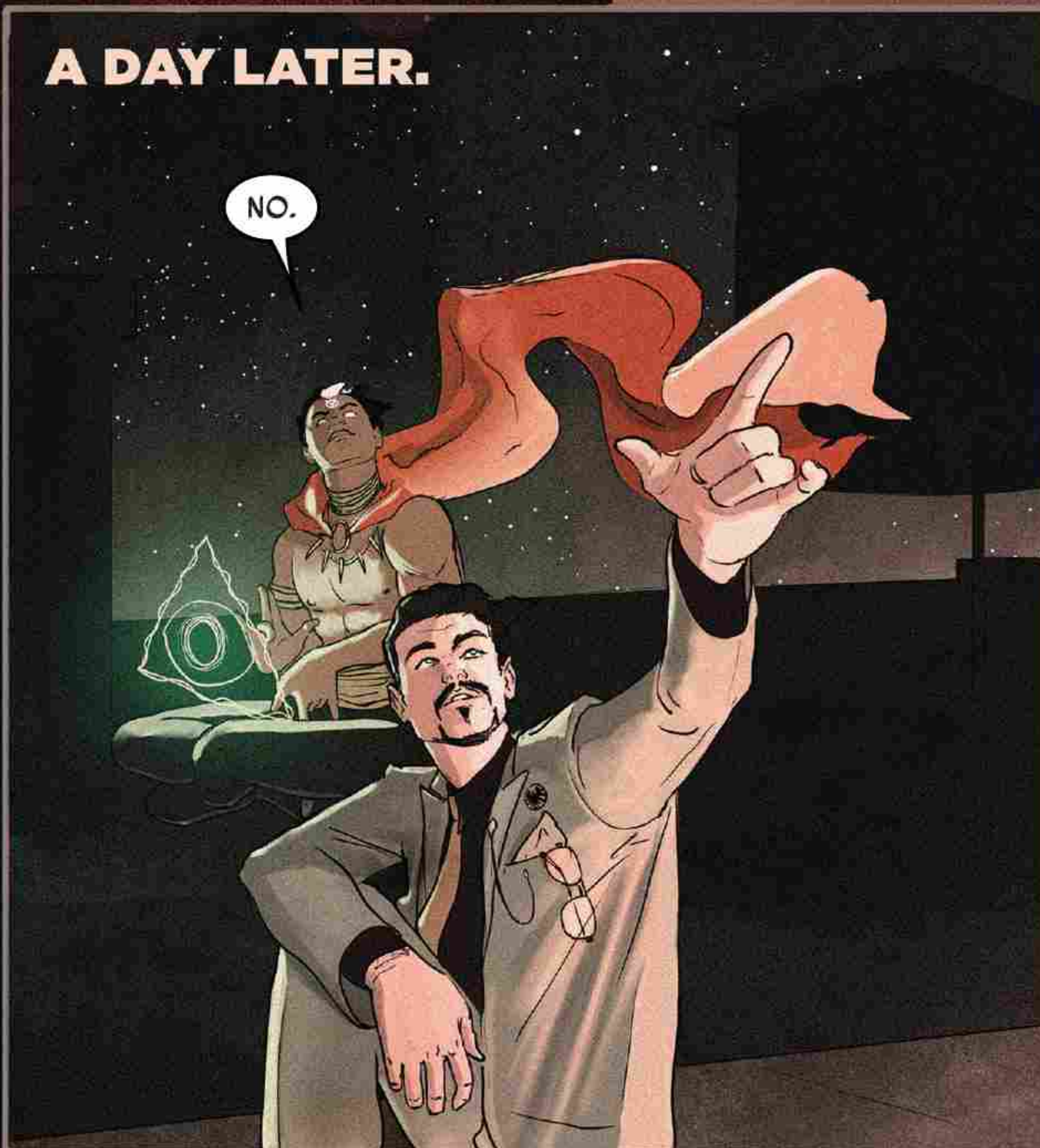
IF YOU
HAVE TO ASK,
THEN YOU CAN'T
SEE IT.



HOW
ABOUT
YOU?

DO
YOU SEE
IT?

A DAY LATER.



NO.

A DAY LATER.



NO.

A DAY LATER.



A DAY LATER.

A comic book panel showing Tony Stark in a white shirt and blue pants, holding a green mug, standing on a rooftop. Iron Man is sitting on the roof next to him. A small yellow speech bubble with three dots is next to Iron Man. The background is a dark, starry night sky.

I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN YOU WOULD ONE DAY GROW *MAD* WITH SOMETHING. I HAD ASSUMED *POWER*. BUT I FORGOT *PARANOIA* WAS ALSO A PLAUSIBLE OPTION.

...

A comic book panel showing Spider-Man and Iron Man on a rooftop. They are both looking up at a large, purple, tentacle-like creature that is hanging from the sky. The creature has a question mark on its chest. Spider-Man is holding a glowing orange sword. The background is a dark, starry night sky.

STEP INSIDE AND LET'S FIGURE OUT WHAT'S GOT YOU SO WORKED UP.

Tony Stark is known as many things: billionaire playboy, genius inventor, futurist, hero, human. But when he dons his high-tech armor, he becomes the Mighty Avenger known as Iron Man. Watch him announce this truth. Watch him declare...

I AM... **IRON MAN**

CHAPTER FOUR: LIMITLESS

MUREWA AYODELE
WRITER

DOTUN AKANDE
ARTIST

DOTUN AKANDE
COVER ARTIST

VC's **JOE CARAMAGNA**
LETTERER

GABRIEL MATA
PRODUCTION DESIGNER

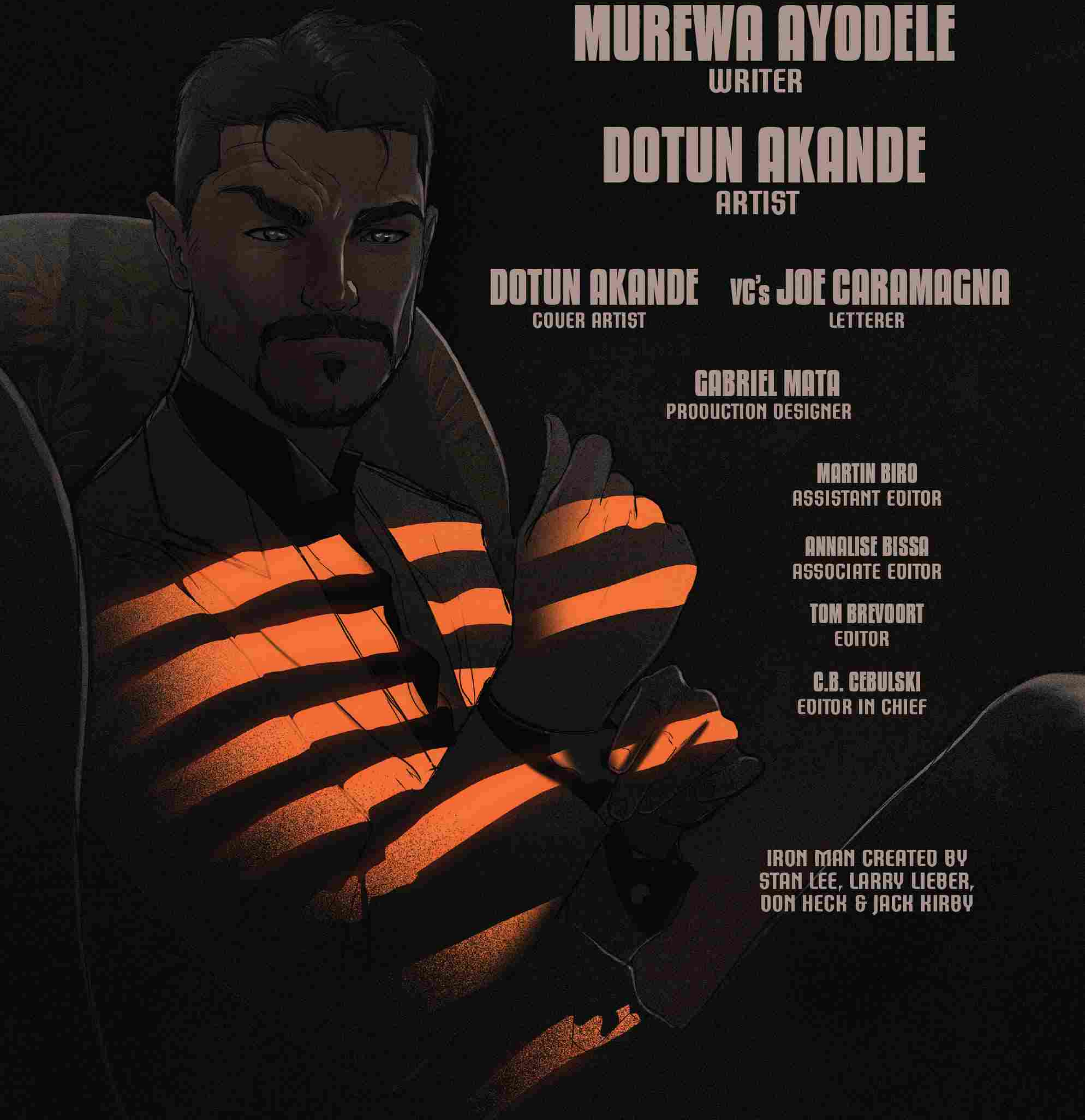
MARTIN BIRO
ASSISTANT EDITOR

ANNALISE BISSA
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

TOM BREVOORT
EDITOR

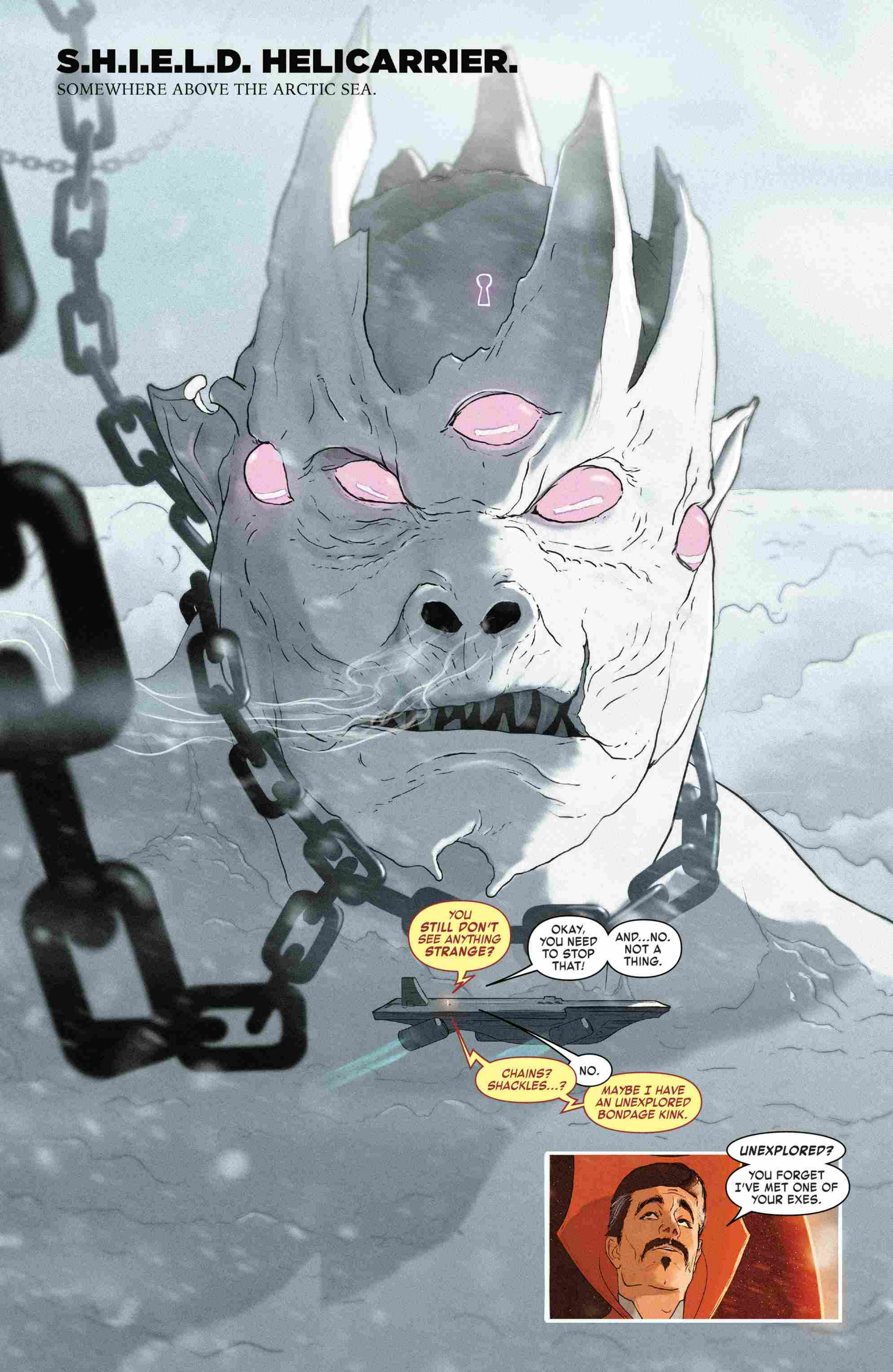
C.B. CEBULSKI
EDITOR IN CHIEF

IRON MAN CREATED BY
STAN LEE, LARRY LIEBER,
DON HECK & JACK KIRBY



S.H.I.E.L.D. HELICARRIER.

SOMEWHERE ABOVE THE ARCTIC SEA.



YOU STILL DON'T SEE ANYTHING STRANGE?

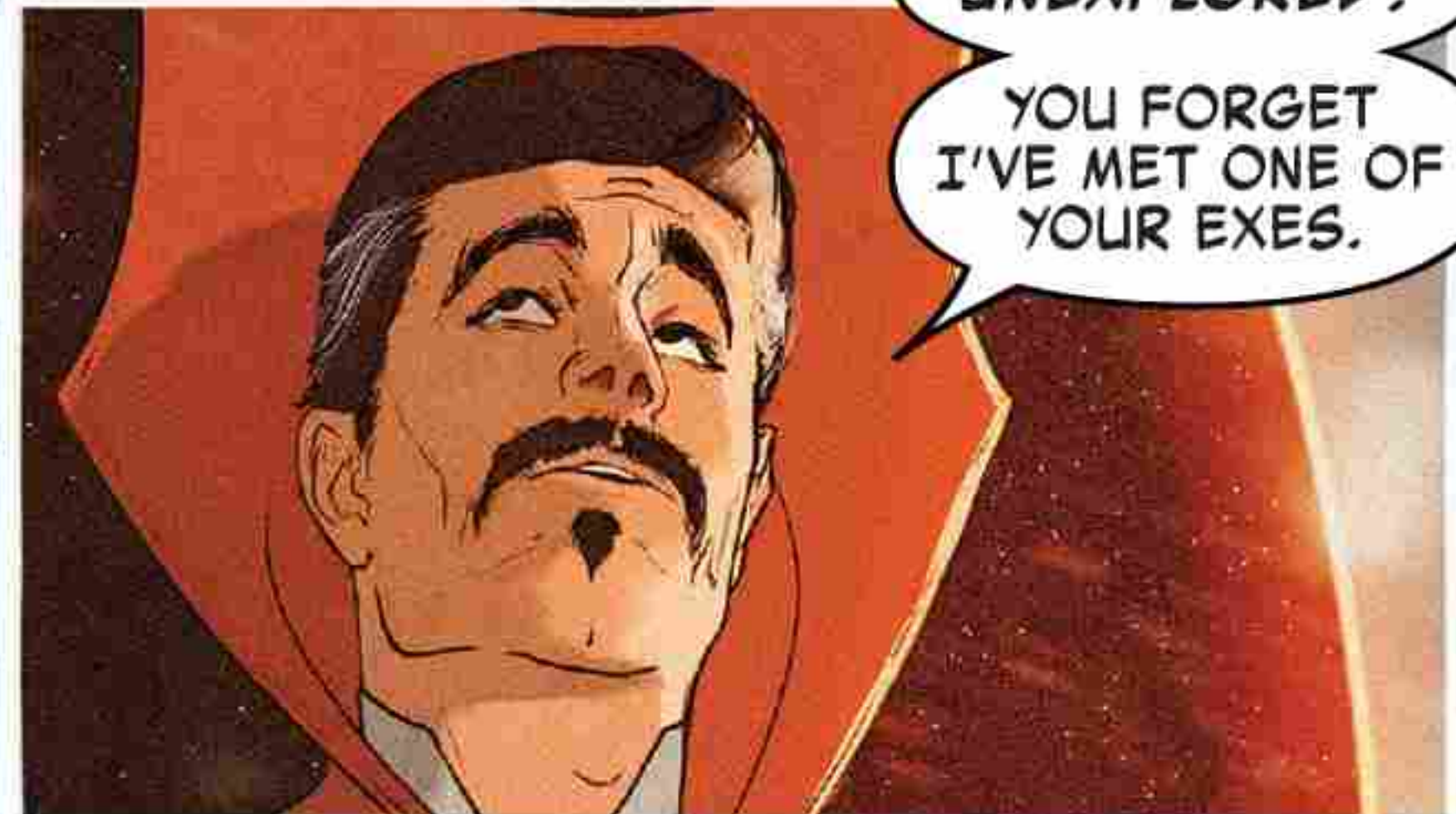
OKAY, YOU NEED TO STOP THAT!

AND...NO. NOT A THING.

CHAINS? SHACKLES...?

NO.

MAYBE I HAVE AN UNEXPLORED BONDAGE KINK.



UNEXPLORED?
YOU FORGET I'VE MET ONE OF YOUR EXES.



THEY SAY,
"NEVER MEET
YOUR
HEROES."

BUT "NEVER
LET YOUR DOCTOR
DATE YOUR EX" SEEMS
LIKE A MUCH MORE
IMPORTANT CODE TO
LIVE BY.

PULL

ZIP

04



I'M
NOT--

--YOUR
DOCTOR."

"NEVER LET
YOUR TEAMMATE, WHOSE
NAME IS **DOCTOR STRANGE**
BUT ISN'T REALLY YOUR DOCTOR
ANYMORE, DATE YOUR EX"
DOESN'T ROLL OFF THE
TONGUE AS WELL, NOW
DOES IT?

PULL



STEEL
YOURSELF.

POKE

AH.
GOOD
ONE.
OUCH!



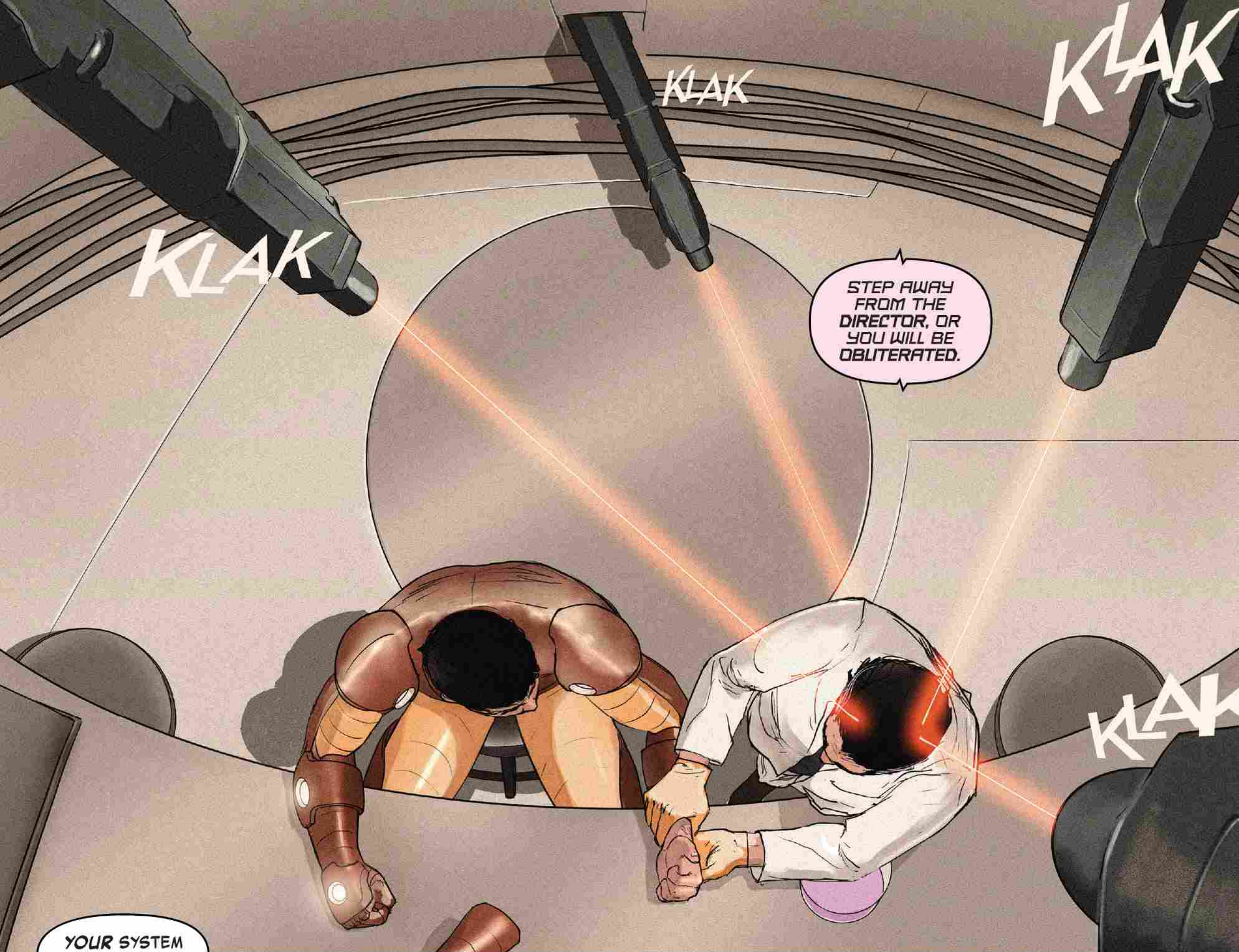
EXPOSED
BLOOD
DETECTED.

ANALYZING...



ANALYSIS
COMPLETE.

RECOGNIZED:
S.H.I.E.L.D.
DIRECTOR TONY
STARK.



YOUR SYSTEM DISAPPOINTS ME, TONY.

IT FAILS TO RECOGNIZE THE SORCERER SUPREME OF THIS WORLD AND THE FUTILITY OF ITS ATTEMPT TO... "OBLITERATE" HIM.



EVEN IN THE FACE OF IMPOSSIBLE OPPOSITION, STRANGE, IT IS IN HUMAN DNA TO DREAM.

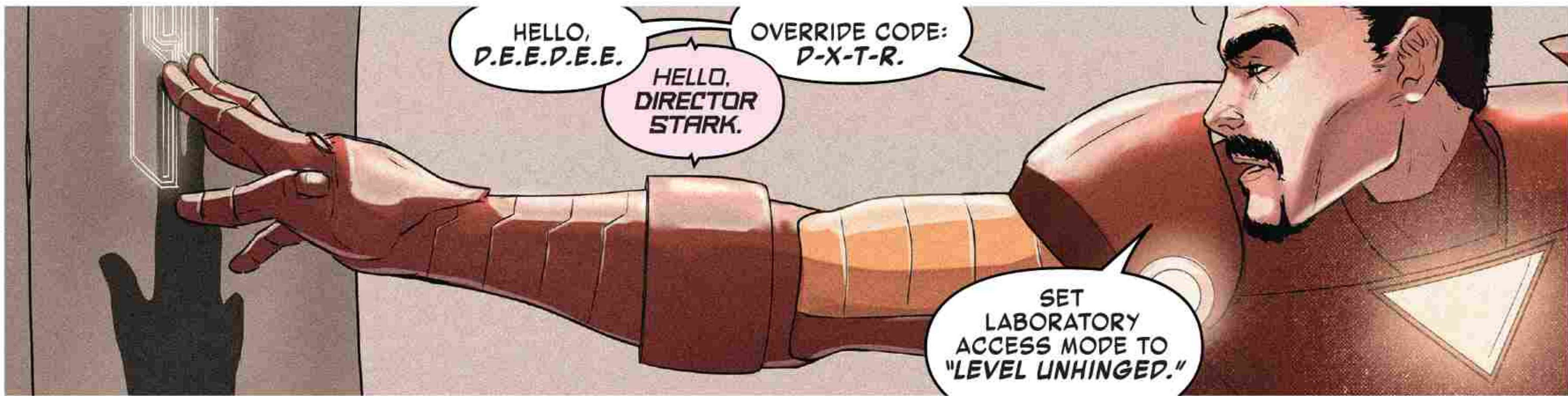


HELLO, P.E.E.P.E.E.

OVERRIDE CODE: D-X-T-R.

HELLO, DIRECTOR STARK.

SET LABORATORY ACCESS MODE TO "LEVEL UNHINGED."



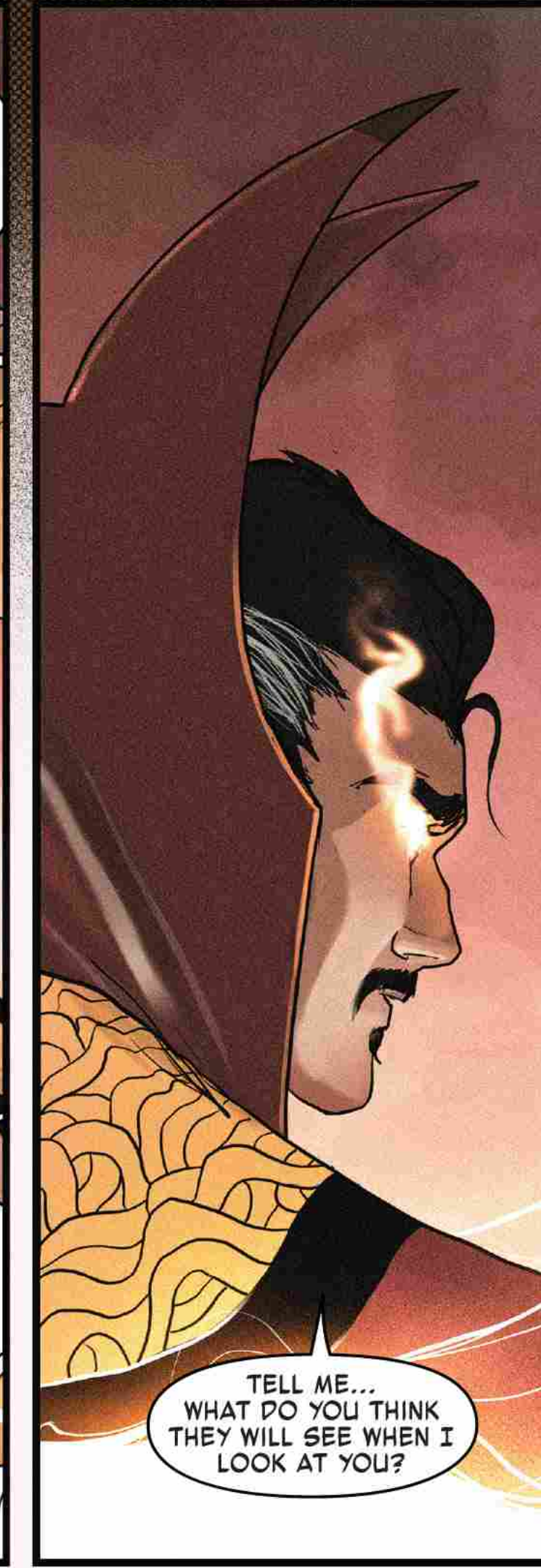
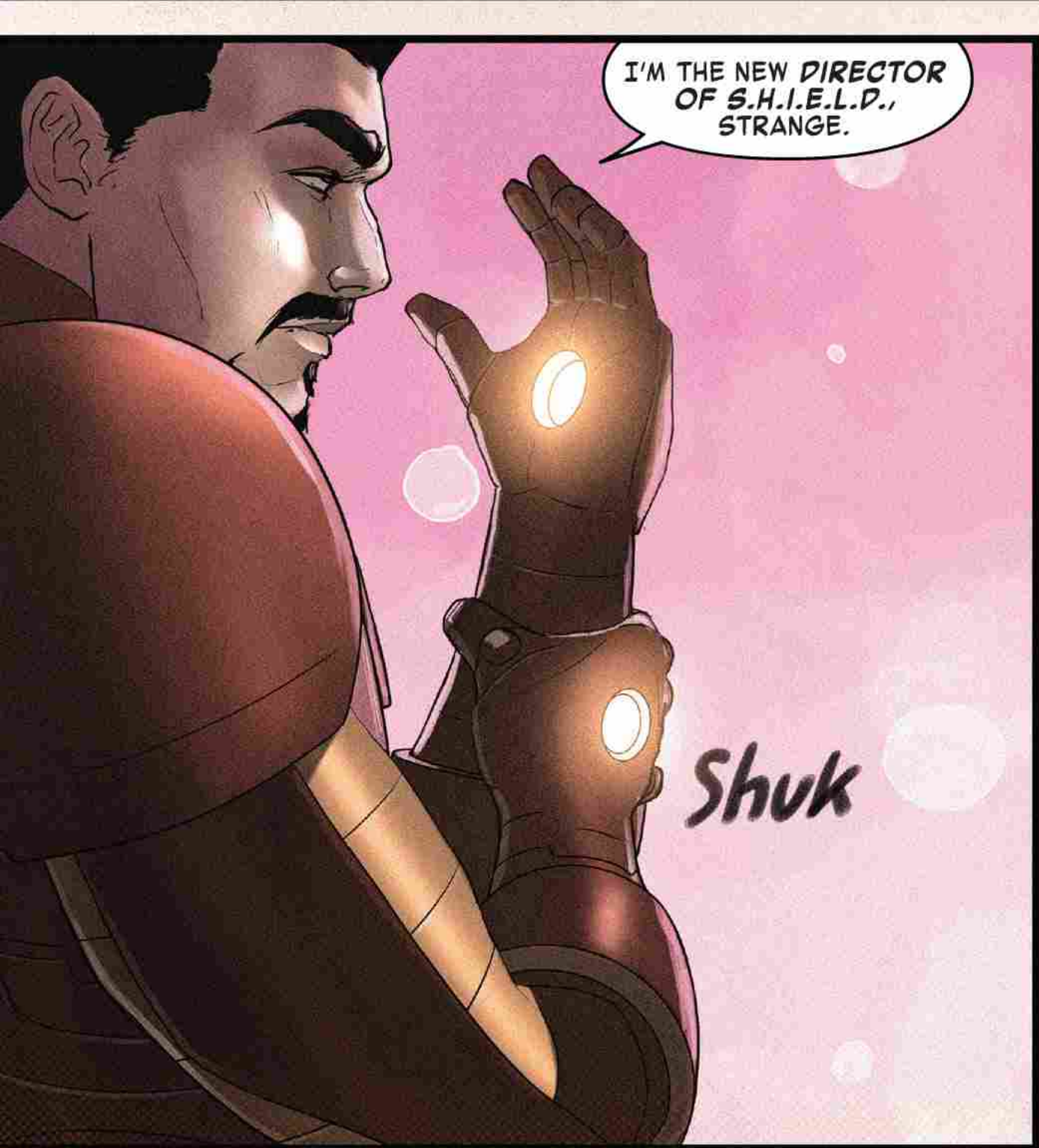
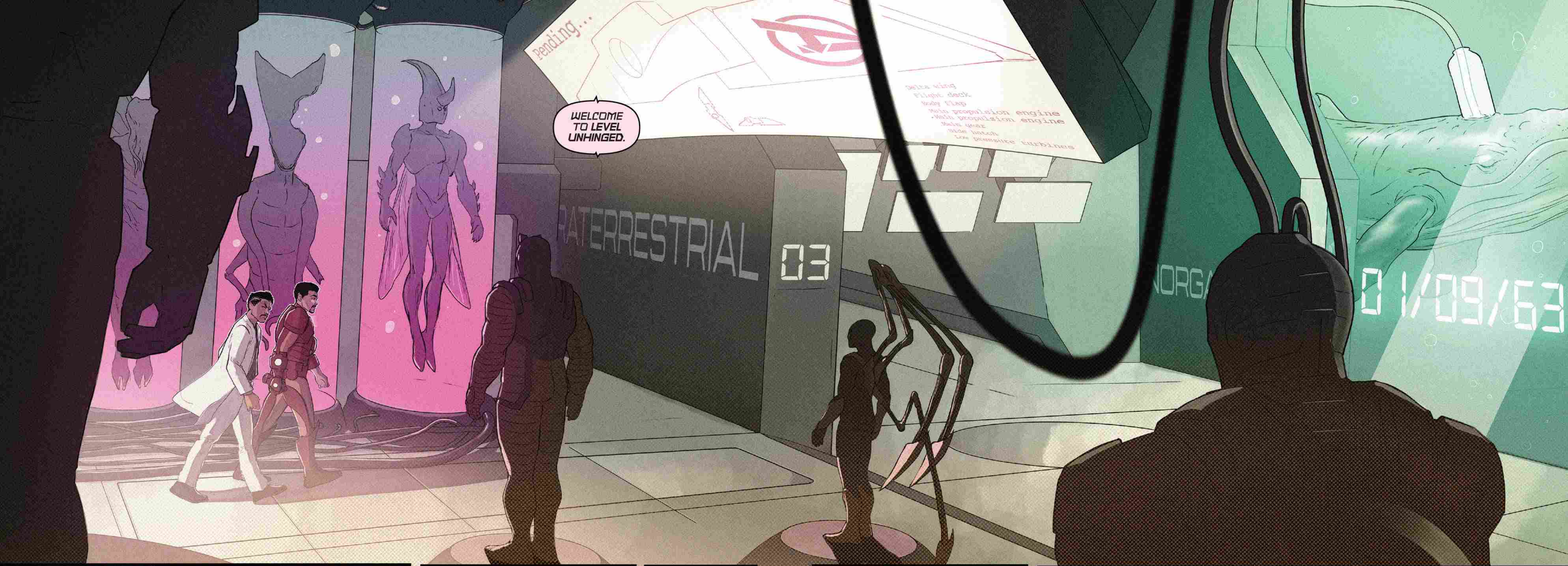
UNRAVELING LABORATORY'S HIDDEN CHAMBERS.

SUSPENDING SECURITY LIMITERS.

YOU CAN NOW WORK WITH A 95% LESS CHANCE OF SOMETHING ATTEMPTING TO UNALIVE YOU.

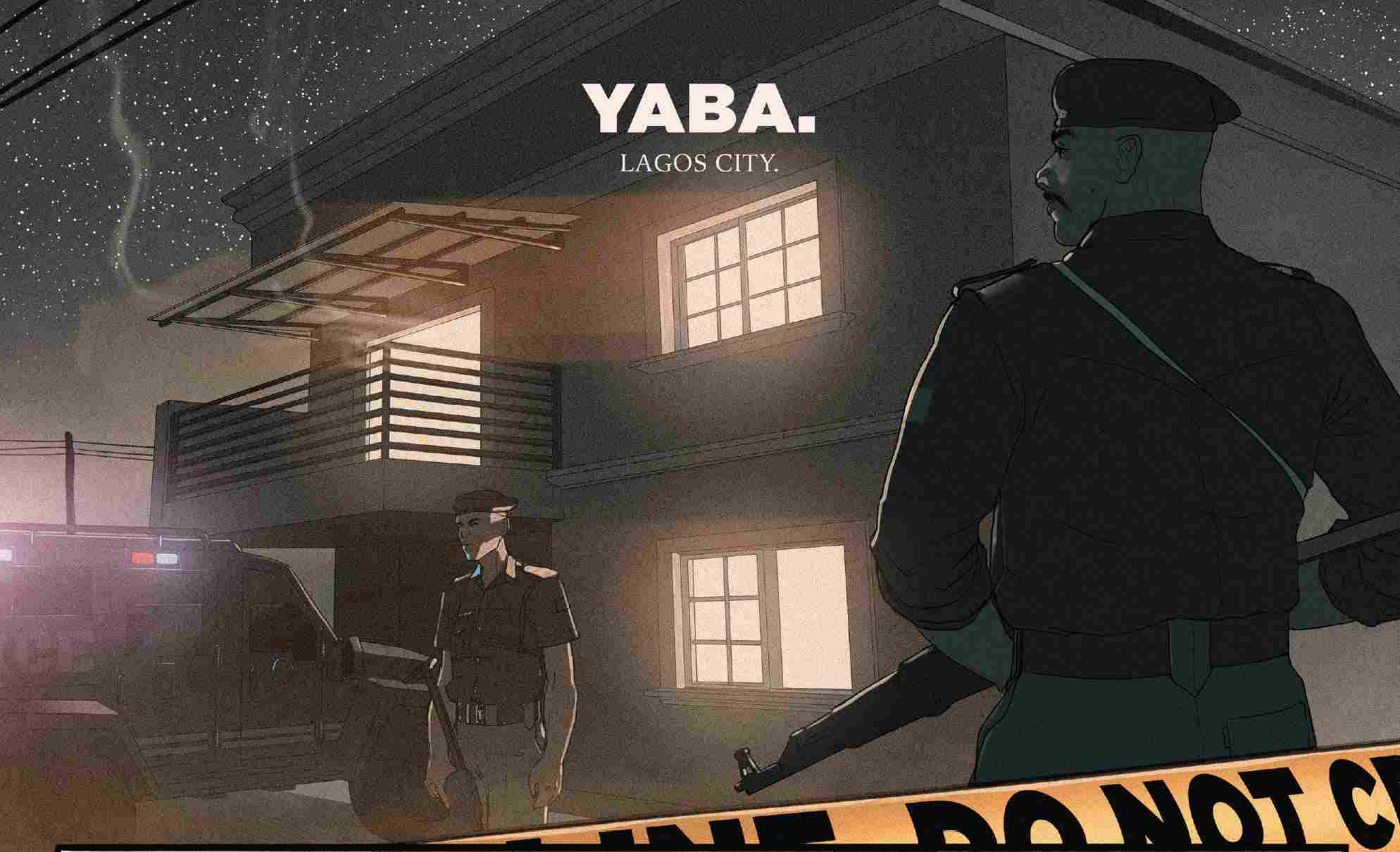
OPEN!





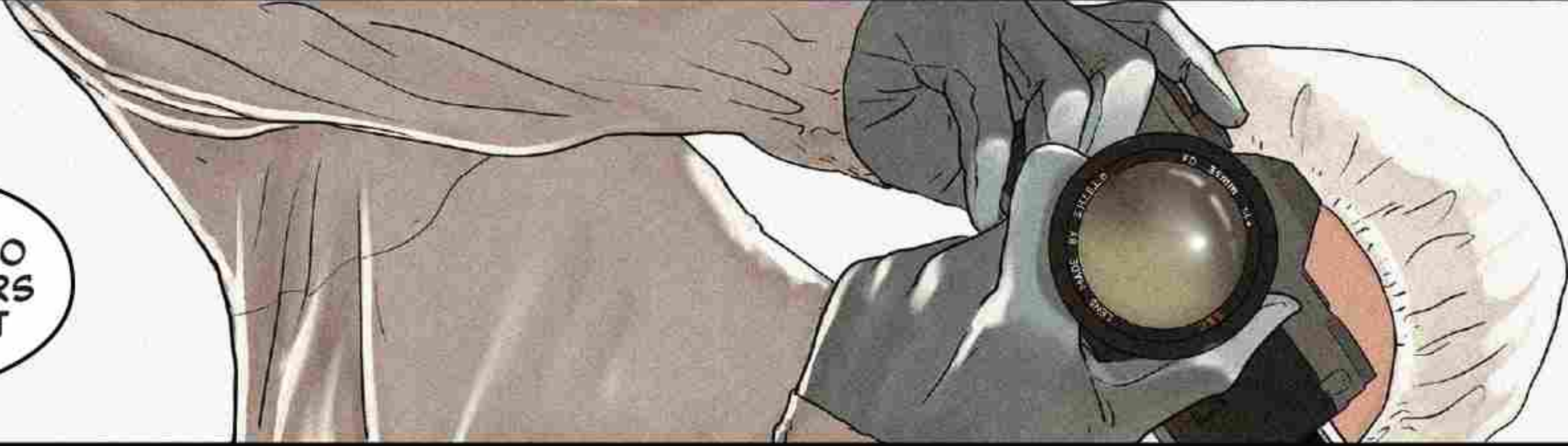
YABA.

LAGOS CITY.



TOOK THREE WEEKS TO FIND THE BODY.

VICTIM HAD BEEN "ACTING PARANOID," SO FRIENDS AND CO-WORKERS ASSUMED THAT HE WENT INTO HIDING.



HE DIED ALONE.

...ALONE WITH THE MURDERER ANYWAY.



THE VICTIM'S SPECIES DOESN'T DECOMPOSE EASILY. WE HAD TO FIND OTHER MEANS OF DATING THE TIME OF DEMISE.

THEY MUST HAVE EVOLVED TO POSSESS SOME SORT OF A **HEALING FACTOR**, SO IT'S PERFECTLY NORMAL THAT THERE ARE NO SIGNS OF PHYSICAL TRAUMA.

HOWEVER, SCANS SHOW THAT **VITAL ORGANS** ARE MISSING. THE KILLER MUST HAVE TAKEN THEM TO MAKE SURE THE VICTIM WOULD STAY DEAD EVEN AFTER THE VICTIM'S BODY HEALED ITSELF.

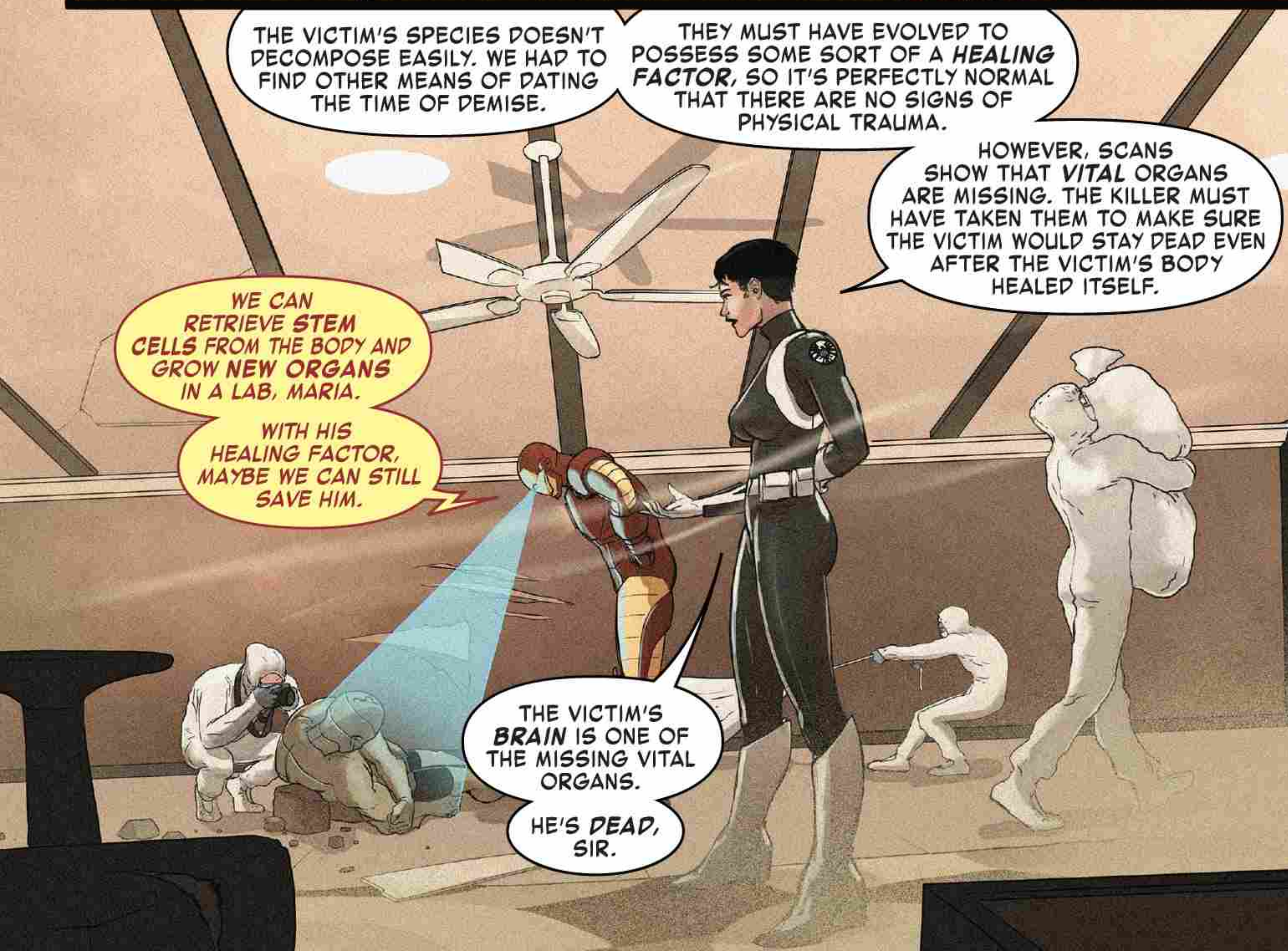
WE CAN RETRIEVE **STEM CELLS** FROM THE BODY AND GROW NEW ORGANS IN A LAB, MARIA.

WITH HIS **HEALING FACTOR**, MAYBE WE CAN STILL SAVE HIM.

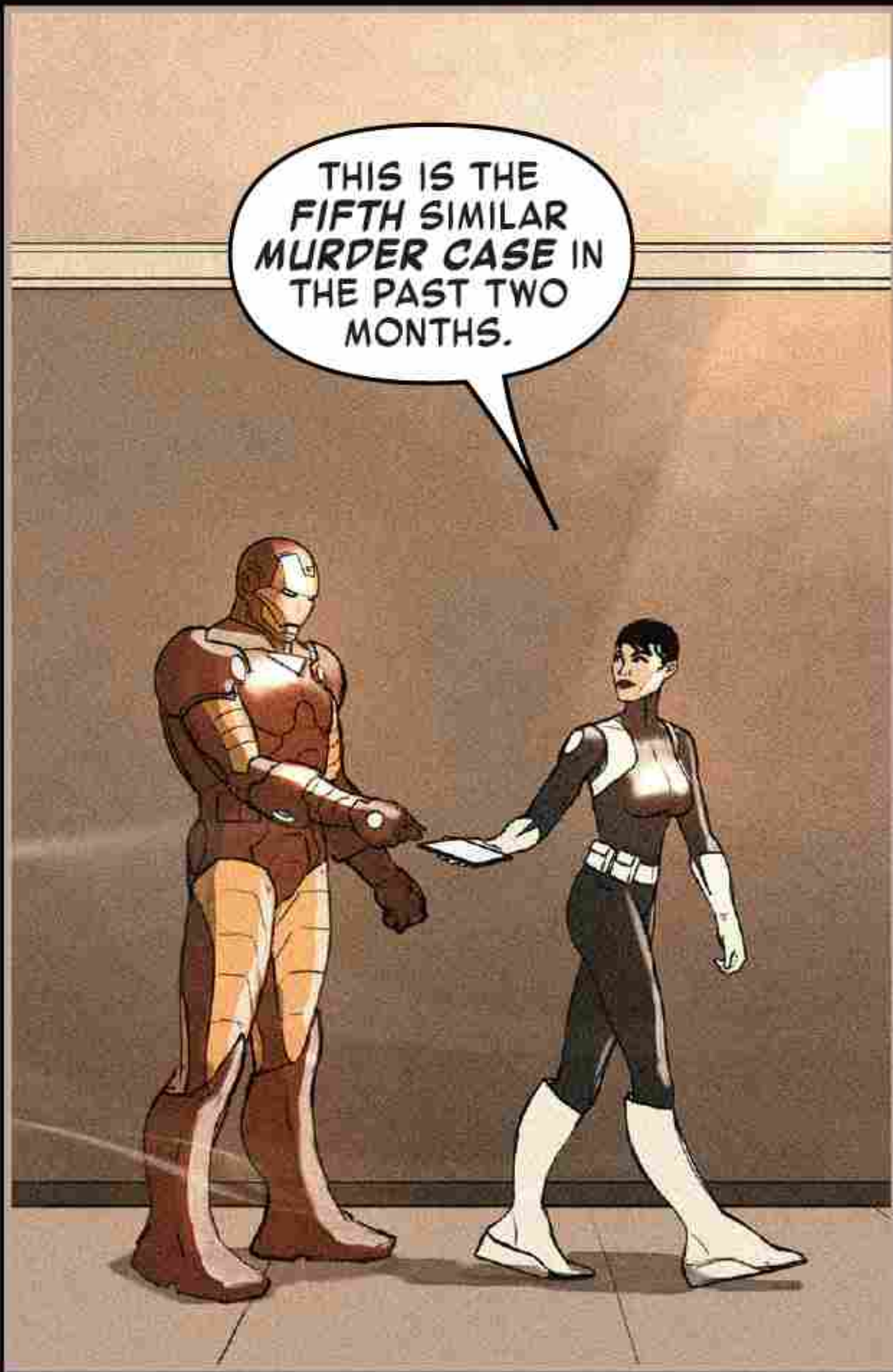
WHY AM I REALLY HERE, HILL?

THE VICTIM'S **BRAIN** IS ONE OF THE MISSING VITAL ORGANS.

HE'S DEAD, SIR.



THIS IS THE
FIFTH SIMILAR
MURDER CASE IN
THE PAST TWO
MONTHS.

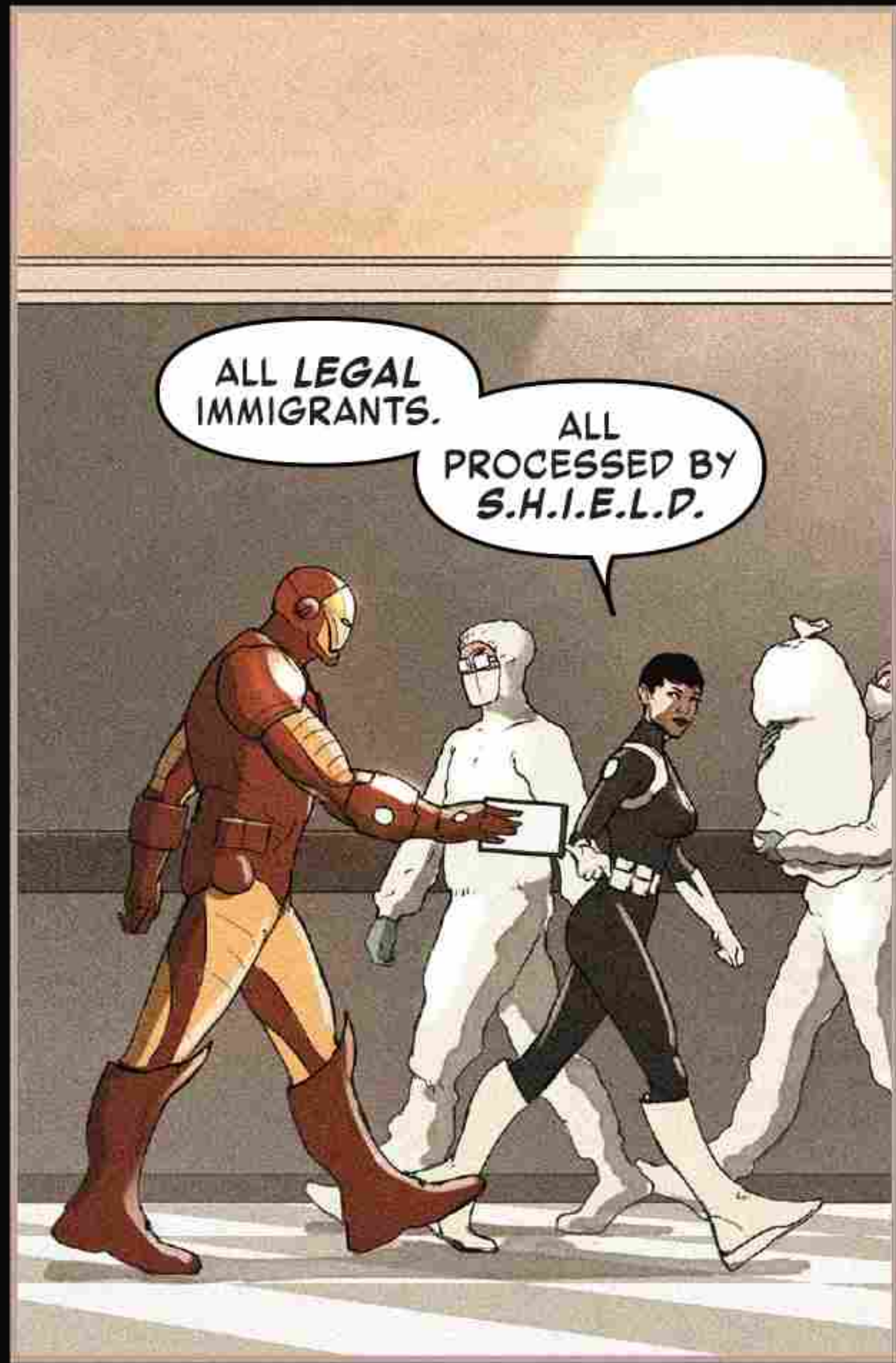


THE VICTIMS
HAVE ALL BEEN
EXTRATERRESTRIAL
IMMIGRANTS.



ALL LEGAL
IMMIGRANTS.

ALL
PROCESSED BY
S.H.I.E.L.D.



ALL WITH
RESIDENCES
PERSONALLY
ASSIGNED BY
YOU, SIR.

PLEASE,
AT EASE.



OKAY.

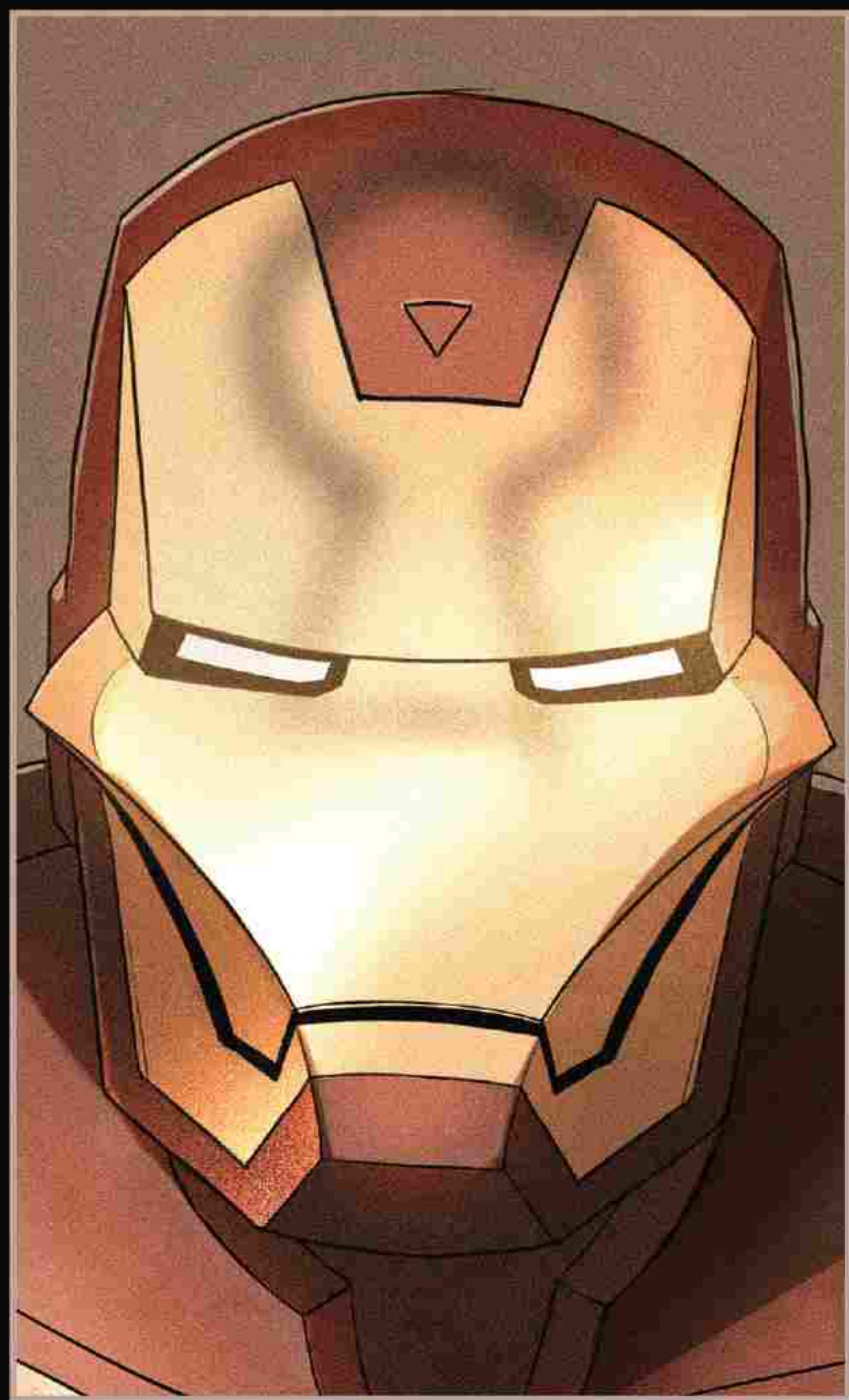
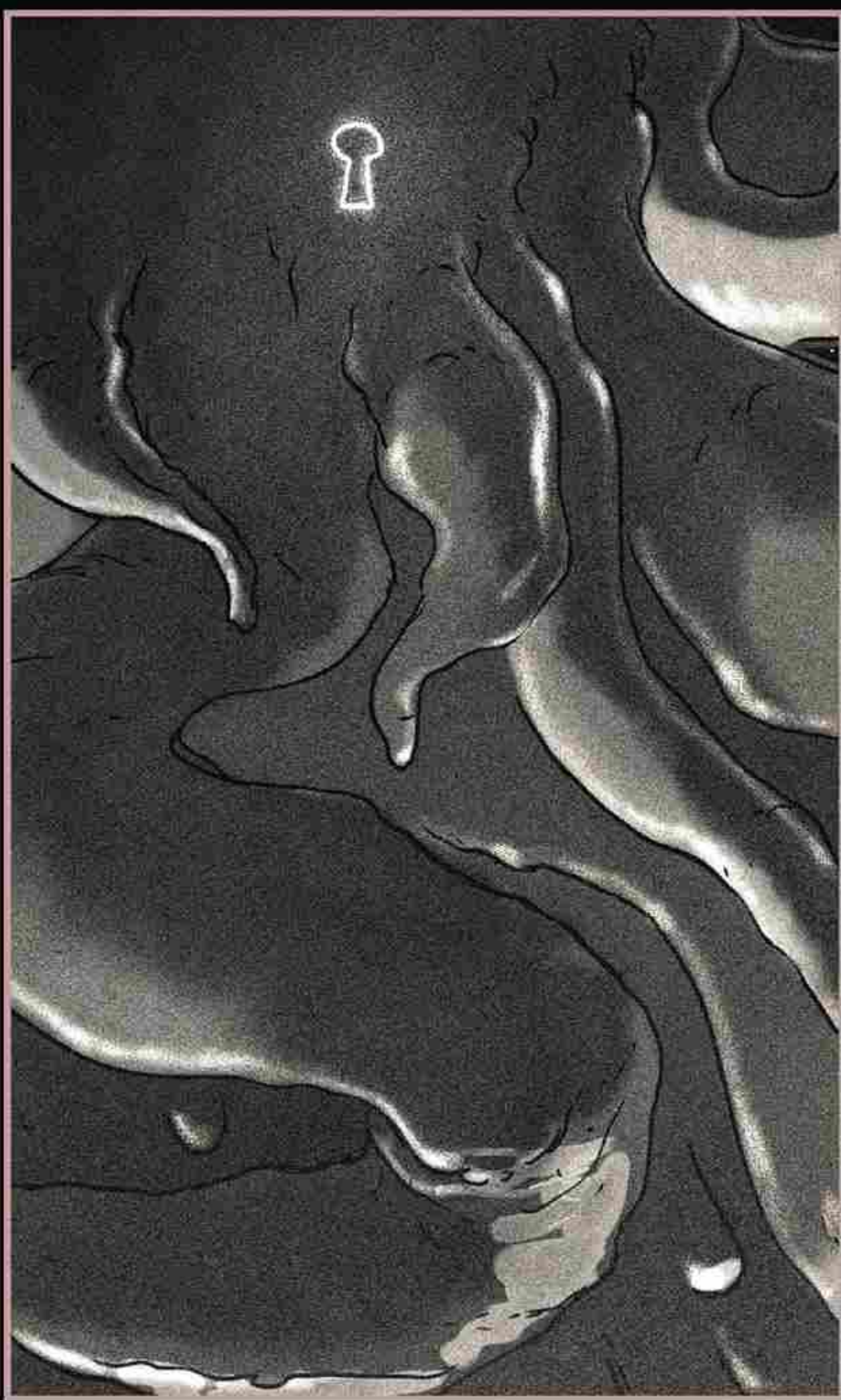
WE'RE
ALONE IN HERE,
TONY.

S.H.I.E.L.D.
GUYS ARE COMING
UP WITH STORIES THAT
DON'T LOOK GOOD
FOR YOU.

HELP US
OUT WITH THAT
BIG BRAIN OF
YOURS.



WHAT
DOES ANY
OF THIS MEAN
TO YOU?





"WE'RE ON OUR WAY TO STOP A POSSIBLE MURDER."

"SOMEONE IS KILLING EARTH'S EXTRATERRESTRIAL IMMIGRANTS..."



"...BUT ONLY THOSE WHO WERE PROCESSED BY ME."



"I'VE BEEN COMPROMISED."

OUR DESTINATION IS TWO HOURS AWAY-- HOW MANY MORE TIMES ARE YOU GOING TO REPEAT THAT LINE?

WE AGREED ON FOUR.

ONCE EVERY THIRTY MINUTES.

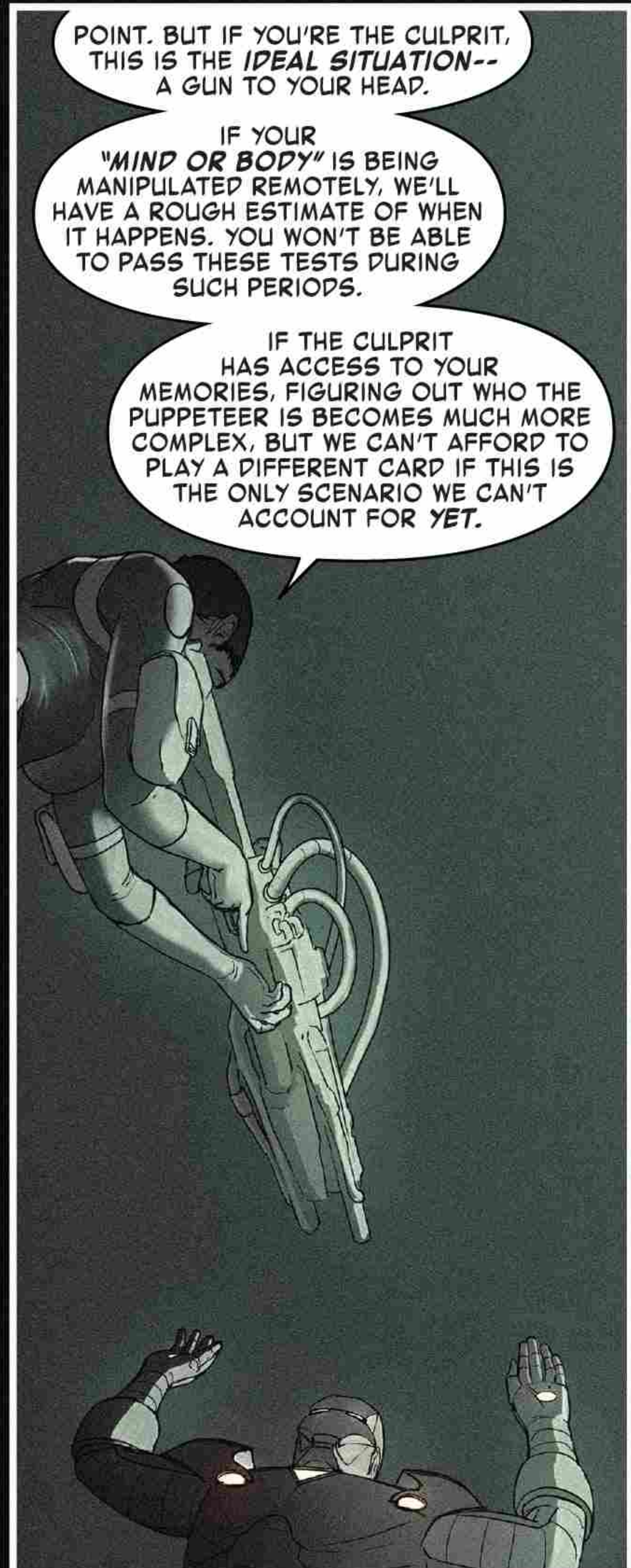
GOOD.

YOU REMEMBER STILL.

YEAH, BUT...

...IF THE CULPRIT HAS ACCESS TO MY MIND OR BODY, THERE IS NO GUARANTEE THAT THEY DON'T HAVE ACCESS TO MY MEMORIES AS WELL.

AND IF THEY HAVE ACCESS TO MY MEMORIES, THEY'LL KEEP PASSING THESE TESTS.



POINT. BUT IF YOU'RE THE CULPRIT, THIS IS THE *IDEAL SITUATION*-- A GUN TO YOUR HEAD.

IF YOUR "*MIND OR BODY*" IS BEING MANIPULATED REMOTELY, WE'LL HAVE A ROUGH ESTIMATE OF WHEN IT HAPPENS. YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO PASS THESE TESTS DURING SUCH PERIODS.

IF THE CULPRIT HAS ACCESS TO YOUR MEMORIES, FIGURING OUT WHO THE PUPPETEER IS BECOMES MUCH MORE COMPLEX, BUT WE CAN'T AFFORD TO PLAY A DIFFERENT CARD IF THIS IS THE ONLY SCENARIO WE CAN'T ACCOUNT FOR *YET*.



TONY.

ABOUT THESE
GIANT DEMONS
YOU'VE BEEN
SEEING...

...HOW
BIG ARE THEY
REALLY?

ATLANTIS.

SOMEWHERE BENEATH THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.

"I JUST WANT
TO SAVE LIVES."

D.E.E.D.E.E.?

YES,
DIRECTOR
STARK.

YOU
KNOW WHAT
TO DO?

YES,
DIRECTOR
STARK.

CHARTING
COURSE...

APPROACHING
SEA LEVEL...

VELOCITY
HAS BEEN INCREASED
AS WE APPROACH THE
STRATOSPHERE...

DIRECTOR
STARK, WE ARE
NOW ESCAPING THE
EXOSPHERE...

WELCOME
TO...

BLUE AREA OF THE MOON.

THE OXYGEN-RICH ENVIRONMENT.

THE LAST OF THE
EXTRATERRESTRIAL
IMMIGRANTS I PROCESSED
CHOSE TO STAY ON
OUR MOON.

THEY ARE
BUILDERS WHO PREFER
SOLELY EACH OTHER'S
COMPANY.

ONLY TONY
STARK KNOWS
THEIR EXACT
LOCATION.

D.E.E.D.E.E.?

YES,
DIRECTOR
STARK.

INITIATE
SELF-DESTRUCT
SEQUENCE.

#\$%&!

I PROGRAMMED THE
SELF-DESTRUCT SEQUENCE TO
BE INSTANTANEOUS, SUDDEN
AND LOUD.

ONES WITH
COUNTDOWNS NEVER
SEEM TO GET THE JOB
DONE.

YOU'RE...

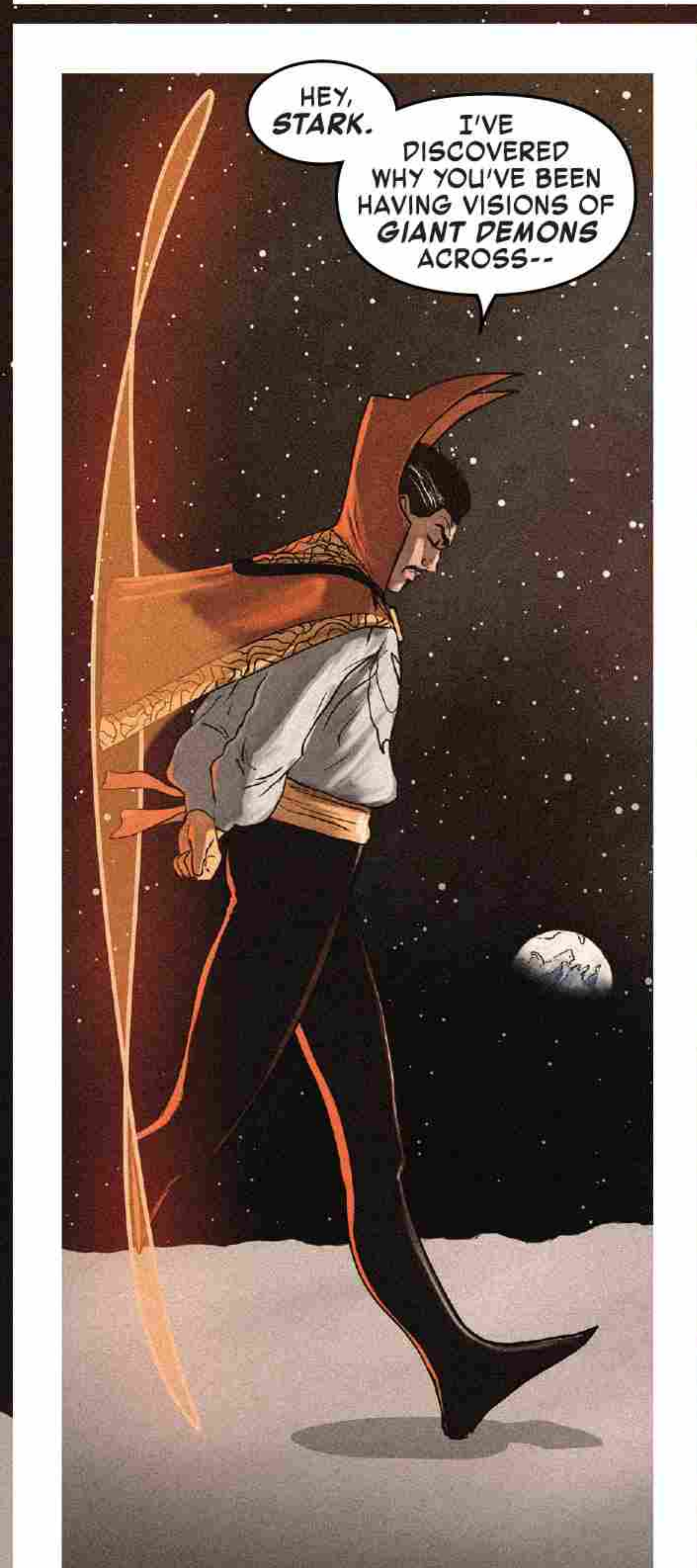
→KOFF←

...THE
KILLER,
TONY.

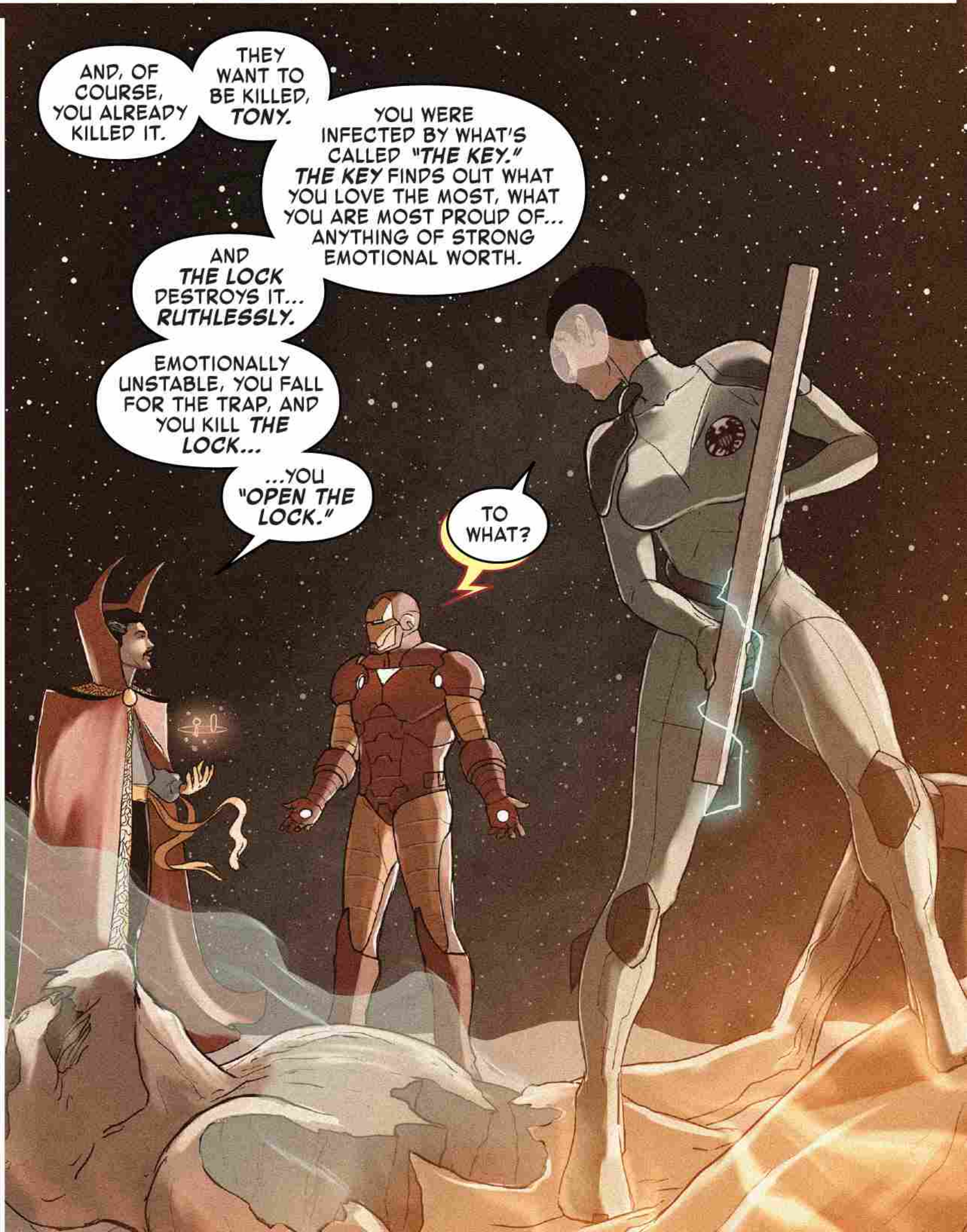




TONY
STARK.
I'VE
COME FOR
YOUR--



HEY,
STARK.
I'VE
DISCOVERED
WHY YOU'VE BEEN
HAVING VISIONS OF
GIANT DEMONS
ACROSS--



AND, OF
COURSE,
YOU ALREADY
KILLED IT.

THEY
WANT TO
BE KILLED,
TONY.

YOU WERE
INFECTED BY WHAT'S
CALLED "THE KEY."
THE KEY FINDS OUT WHAT
YOU LOVE THE MOST, WHAT
YOU ARE MOST PROUD OF...
ANYTHING OF STRONG
EMOTIONAL WORTH.

AND
THE LOCK
DESTROYS IT...
RUTHLESSLY.

EMOTIONALLY
UNSTABLE, YOU FALL
FOR THE TRAP, AND
YOU KILL THE
LOCK...

...YOU
"OPEN THE
LOCK."

TO
WHAT?

"AN
INVASION."

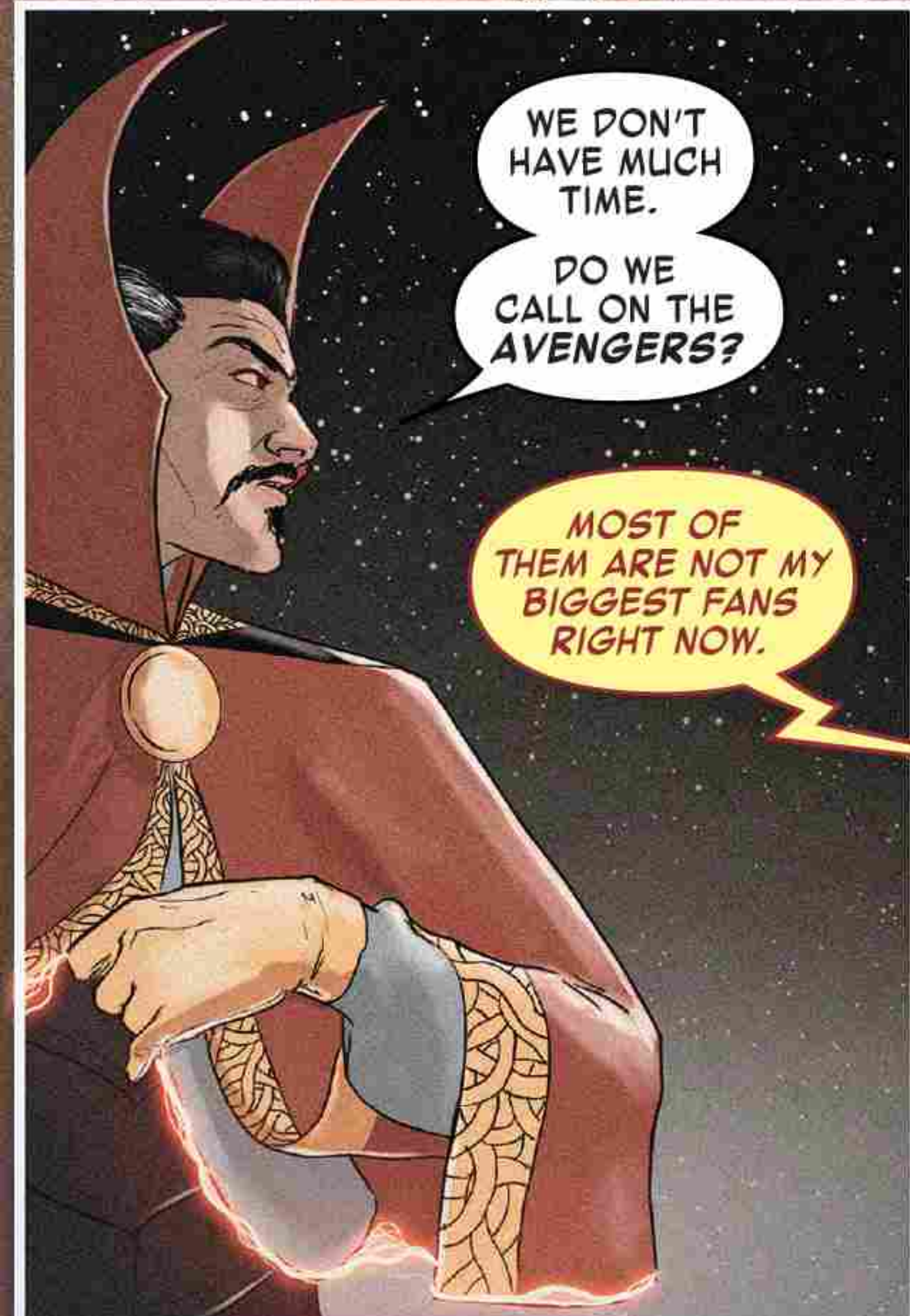


I WONDER
HOW I CAUGHT
A MYSTIC
INFECTION.

THE
POSSIBILITIES
ARE ENDLESS.

SURE.

ARE WE DONE
PRETENDING THAT
TONY DIDN'T GET IT FROM
ONE OF YOUR "BRO
LUNCHES"?



WE DON'T
HAVE MUCH
TIME.

DO WE
CALL ON THE
AVENGERS?

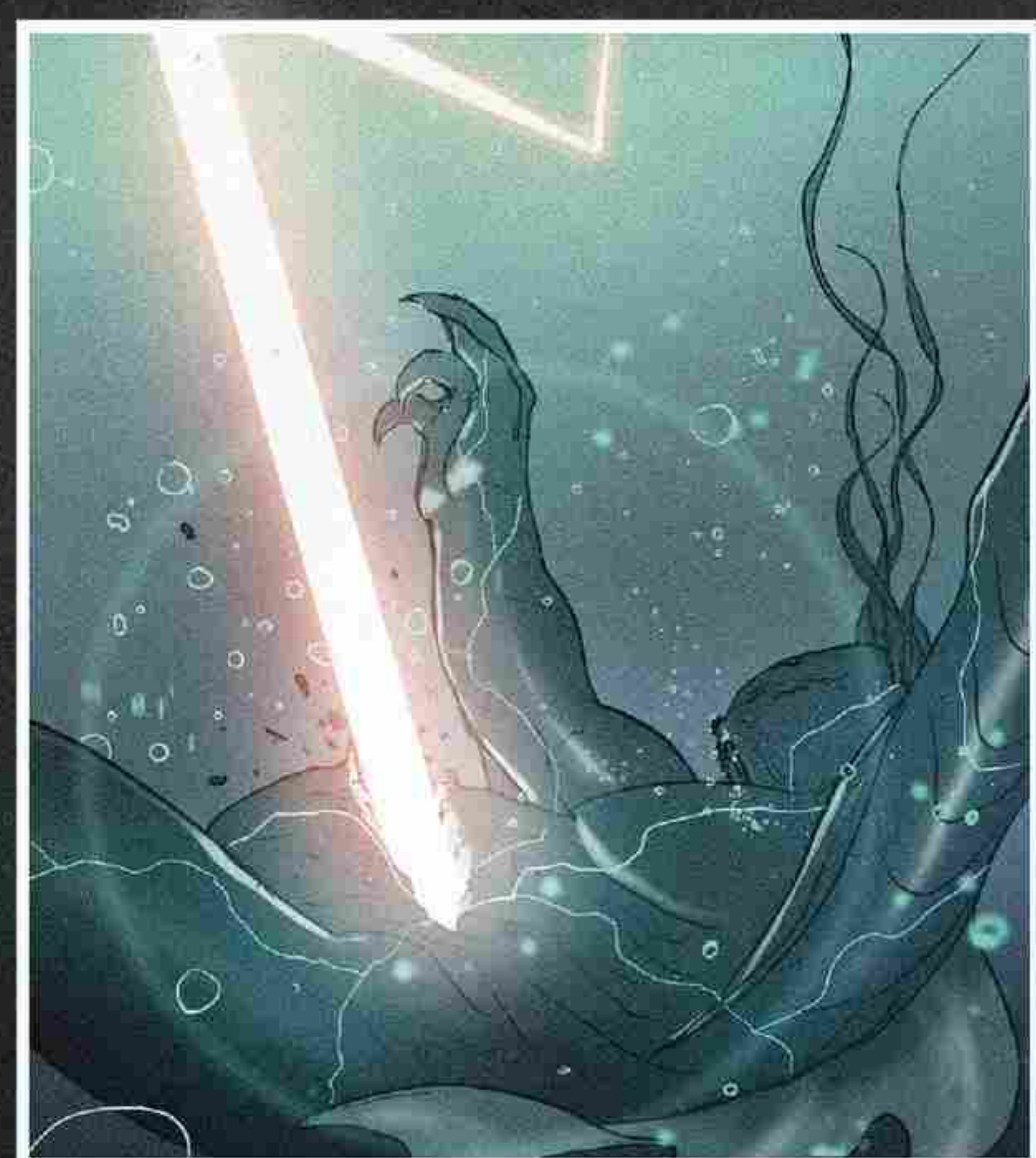
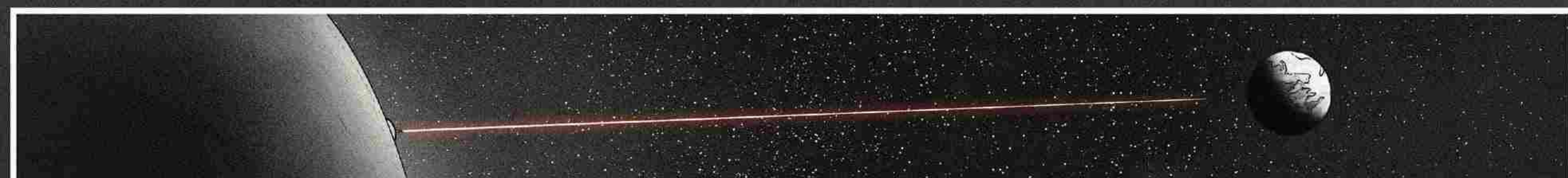
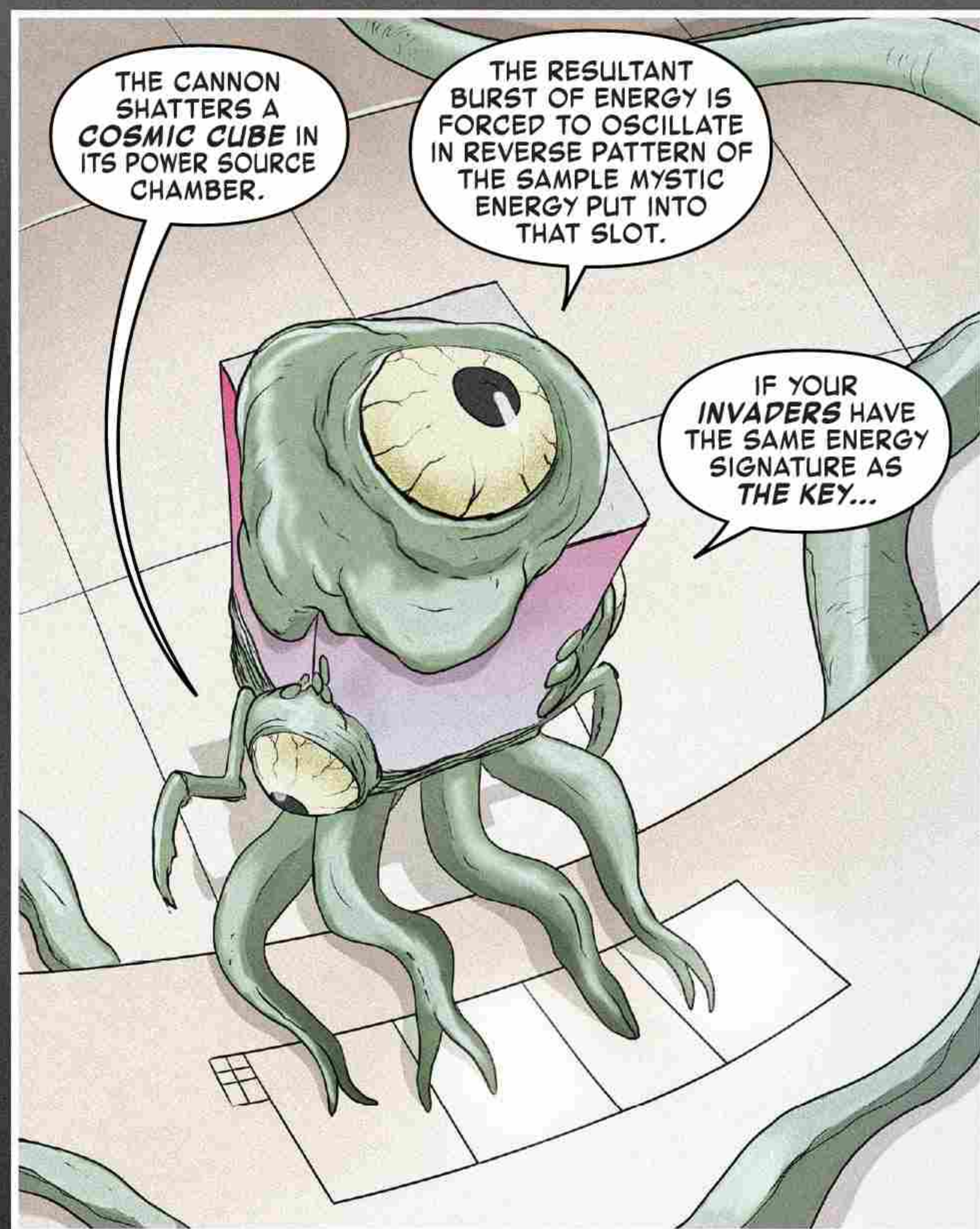
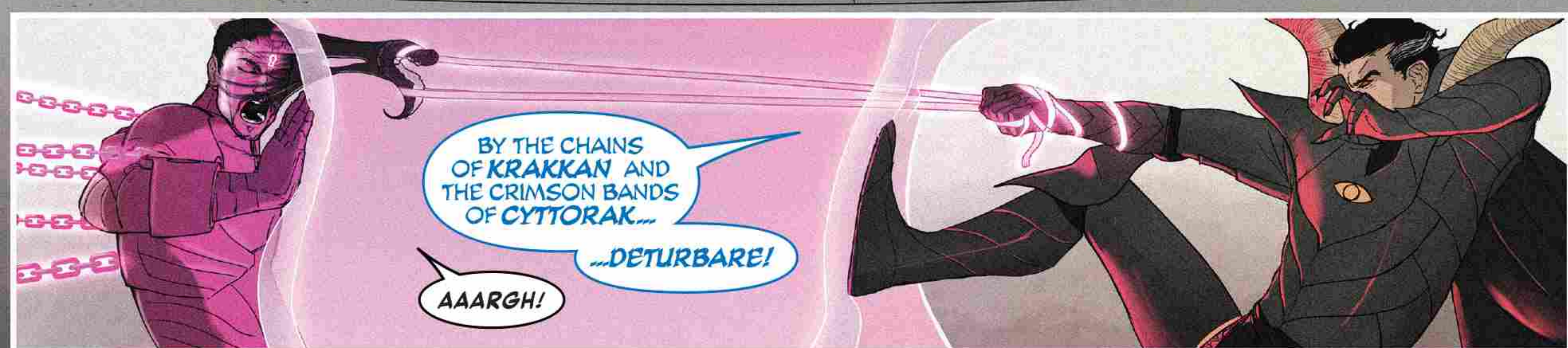
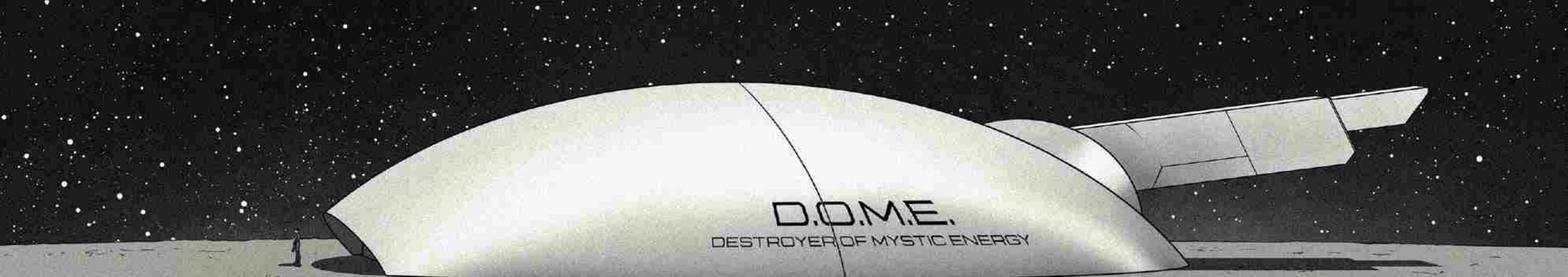
MOST OF
THEM ARE NOT MY
BIGGEST FANS
RIGHT NOW.



STRANGE?

...

AM I STILL
INFECTED
WITH THIS...
"KEY"?





A WEAPON THAT USES THE ALMOST INFINITE POWER OF A COSMIC CUBE TO CANCEL OUT MYSTICAL ENERGY.

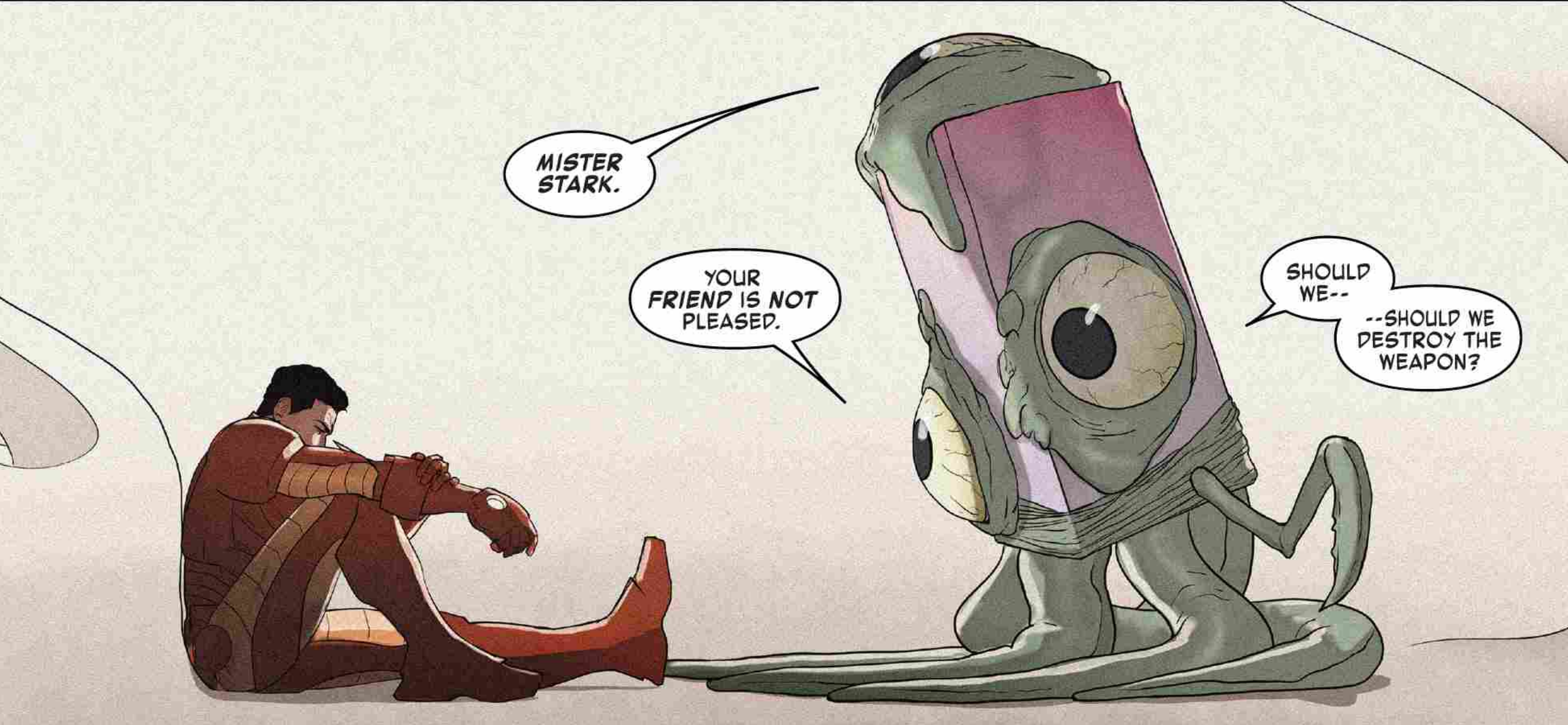
IF I HAD LEFT A PART OF MY SPELL IN THAT CONTRAPTION--

TONY, IS THIS YOUR "STRANGEBUSTER"?

...



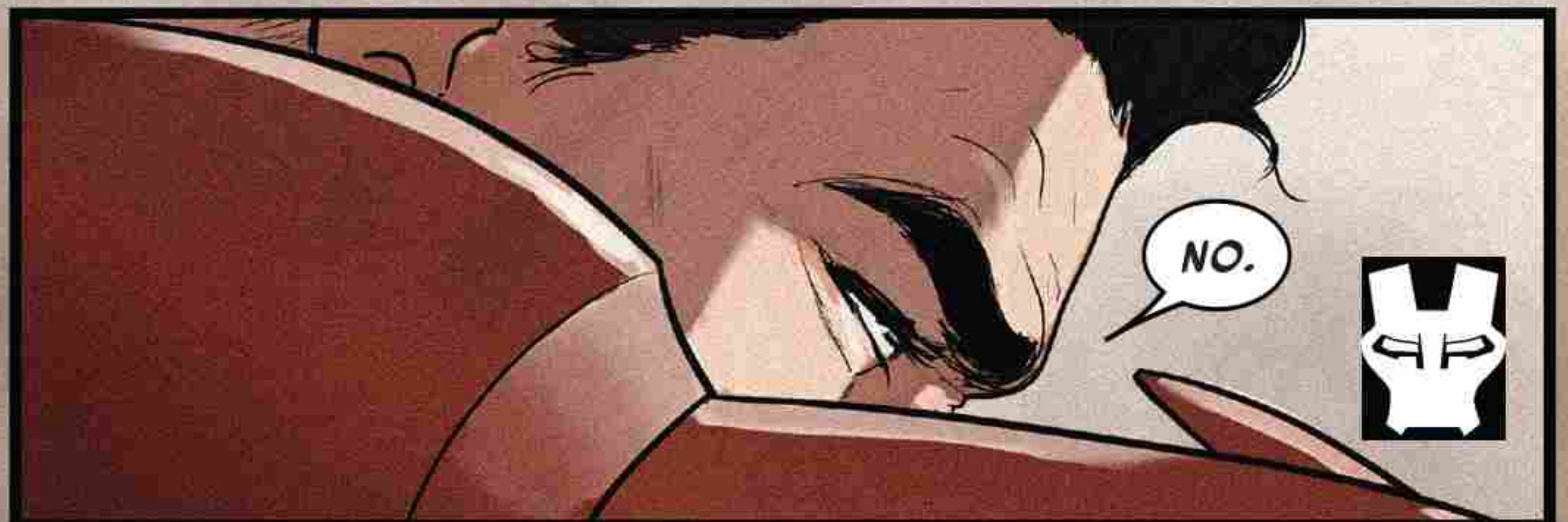
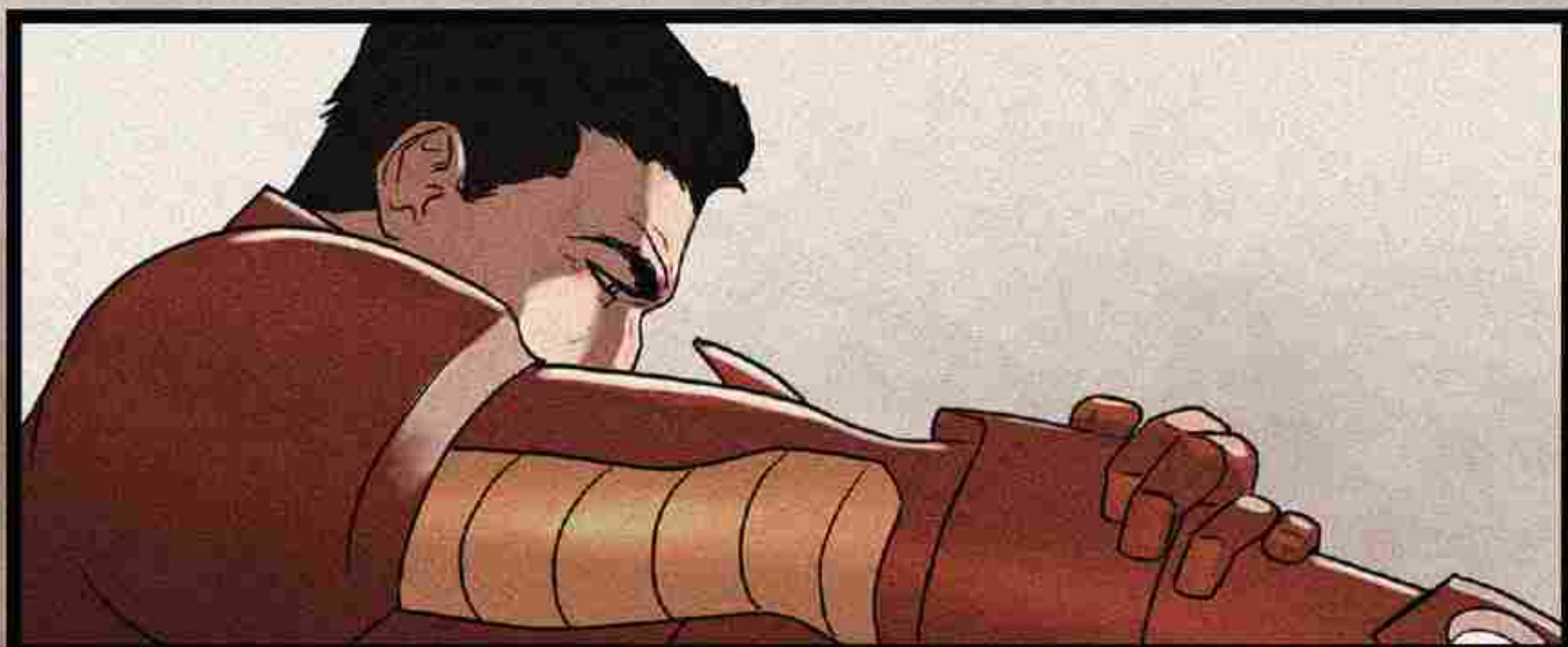
YOU TRULY HAVE NO LIMIT, TONY STARK.



MISTER STARK.

YOUR FRIEND IS NOT PLEASED.

SHOULD WE--
--SHOULD WE DESTROY THE WEAPON?



NO.



I AM... IRON MAN

There was a time in university when Dotun (the artist of this book and my best friend) and I grew apart. I was going through some stuff, so I started rolling with some other students—ones I usually wouldn't roll with.

It was fun for a while. But I soon started to change under the influence of my new friends. Before I knew it, I had become a mere shadow of my former self. It took years of self-discovery and renewed friendship with my best friend, Dotun, to finally be proud of who I looked at in the mirror.

During this era (fifth decade) of Iron Man comics, to make the world a safer place, Tony Stark worked much more closely with the government and was made the Director of S.H.I.E.L.D. Tony became more pragmatic and less empathetic. This often put him at odds with his friends.

Iron Man detained friends (heroes who opposed the Superhuman Registration Act), banished friends (Hulk in the Planet Hulk storyline) and fought against his brother from another mother (Captain America in the Civil War storyline). Working with S.H.I.E.L.D. was poison for his soul, despite the good he did with them.

As fans of Tony Stark, we love Iron Man, not despite, but especially because of this era of Iron Man comics. And that's because we've all been there... Forced to be less of who we really are for love, a job or just to feel accepted. This era proves that our hero, Tony Stark, is just as human as we all are.

As we forgave Iron Man for his past, we must also learn to forgive ourselves too.

Congratulations on the first issue of I AM IRON MAN! Can't believe it's been sixty years since Tony's first appearance already, and I'm very glad you got the opportunity to celebrate his anniversary with this run. The first issue was a blast, and I was grinning like a fool throughout it all. Ah, the nostalgia! I couldn't help but notice that Tony is wearing a wedding ring and got extremely curious. Who is this mysterious spouse? When did that even happen? Will you reveal them in the next few issues, or do we have to wait for Duggan's ongoing Iron Man run for the reveal? Looking forward to reading the rest of this and every future project of yours. I know my favorite character is in good hands with you.

Lara B.

Thanks for reaching out and for your kind words. We are super glad that you enjoyed our first issue. We were grinning so hard too as we tried to cram as many things as possible from sixty years of Iron Man comics into a single issue.

We read Iron Man comics every month. So we are creating mysteries we want to see answered in a future Iron Man comic. One such mystery is the identity of Tony's future spouse. We want to one day be able to write an email (as excited fans) to that creative team as you have written to us.

I was reading my copy of I AM IRON MAN #2, and I noticed that you are once again looking for messages from readers, so here is another one from overseas:

I really enjoyed reading issue #2 of this limited series. Great, unique storyline, lovely bits of humor in dark (literally & figuratively) places and underwater panels looked so good too. Mostly, I loved seeing that the giant fish-creature was given proper characterization. And if you welcome questions too, here is one regarding this issue: Was it a tough decision to focus on the storyline without any big hero-vs.-villain fights? Personally, I found this refreshing, but it's certainly not a typical move for comics.

Best,
Anna K.

We were so worried about the underwater scenes and how they would come off in print. Even digitally, these panels were quite dark--literally. We really wanted to sell the fact that beneath the ocean is a dark and lonely place to be, but with a friend, it can be a little brighter. So we are so happy that you picked up on that.

Concerning your question... We love big hero-vs.-villain fights. We love them so much that we've once created an entire comic book issue that was entirely a fight scene. So for I AM IRON MAN #2, we (and our awesome editor, Tom) planned to have an intense confrontation between Iron Man and Firebrand. That story was supposed to show how Iron Man sacrifices so much to be a hero, yet people like Firebrand still deem him a menace just because of his social class.

Social commentaries are great. However, we all fell in love with Fred the Psychic Fish and wanted to spend more time with him in the pages of the issue. We also decided to trade our previous theme for a more personal one that we could all relate to...our bodies betraying us. (Murewa here: Growing up with a heart condition, the theme and the title of that episode have been with me for decades.)

In short, we (and Tom) were more than happy to tell the story the way we did. We understood that it was an unusual take on super-hero stories, but we trusted our audience, and you are proof that we made the right decision.

Much Love,
Murewa Ayodele & Dotun Akande

EMAIL US AT MHEROES@MARVEL.COM AND MARK YOUR MESSAGES "OKAY TO PRINT"
FOR A CHANCE TO SEE THEM ANSWERED IN FUTURE ISSUES!

NEXT:

I AM... **IRON MAN** **#5**



An old, forgotten (Silver Age) foe returns. They crave the destruction of IRON MAN and the subjugation of Earth. To defeat them, Iron Man seeks out help from a usual place--a superhuman prison. Follow Iron Man on his quest to protect Earth as he builds a planet-protector cannon, trades brutal blows with SHE-HULK and makes a new friend along the way.



ZONE